

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4874

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP PFOR BG (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: REACTION TO SECRETARY'S VISIT

1. LOCAL REACTION TO DR. KISSINGER'S VISIT, BOTH IN THE PRESS AND AMONG OUR BENGALIEE CONTACTS, HAS BEEN AS ANTICIPATED: (1) RENEWED FAITH THAT AMERICAN HAS A GENUINE CONCERN FOR BANGLADESH; (2) AN INEVITABLE HEIGHTENED EXPECTATION OF MORE AND SUBSTANTIAL US AID; (3) AN INTERPRETATION OF THE SECRETARY'S PRAISE OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND REFERENCE TO BANGLADESH'S POTENTIAL AS REFUTATION OF FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS QUESTIONING THE VIABILITY OF BANGLADESH AND ITS GOVERNMENT: AND (4) A PERSISTENT VIEW THAT THE VISIT REPRESENTS A SWING TO THE WEST IN BDG'S FOREIGN POLICY.

2. ALTHOUGH THE PRESS COVERAGE OF THE SECRETARY'S VISIT WAS REMARKABLY STRAIGHTFORWARD AND ACCURATE, COMMENTARY AND HEADLINES WERE TO A DEGREE SELECTIVE, REFLECTING THE DESIRE OF MOST BENGALIEES TO SEE IN THE VISIT THE COMMITMENT OF CONSIDERABLE US AID, BOTH SHORT AND LONG TERM. SUCH AID "COMMITMENTS" WERE EXPLAINED VARIOUSLY, WITH LOCALE REFERENCE TO THE FACTS OF US-BANGLADESH RELATIONS:

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THE USG HAD FINALLY CHANGED ITS POLICY WITH THE NEW FORD

ADMINISTRATION; THE USG HAS RECONGNIZED ITS MORAL RESPONSIBILITY TO THE POOR NATIONS SUCH AS BANGLADESH; AND, FROM THE LEFTIST OPPOSITION, THE USG WISHES TO UNDERMINE THE INDEPENDENCE OF BANGLADESH AND/OR EXPLOIT ITS RESOURCES. WHILE THE SECRETARY'S REFERENCES TO THE NEED FOR INCREASED DOMESTIC FOOD PRODUCTION WERE GIVEN DUE ATTENTION, THE EMPHASIS WAS UPON THE FOREIGN INPUTS NECESSARY TO THAT PRODUCTION, NOT ON BENGALEE SELF-HELP.

3. CONCERNED ABOUT ITS REPUTATION FOLLOWING A SPATE OF FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS ON THE INEFFICIENCY, CORRUPTION, AND MISMANAGEMENT IN BANGLADESH, THE GOVERNMENT-ADMINISTERED PRESS IN PARTICULAR SIEZED UPON THE SECRETARY'S REFERENCES TO THE PRIME MINISTER AS A MAN OF VAST CONCEPTIONS AND TO THE "POTENTIAL" OF THE COUNTRY AS INDICATIVE OF USG CONFIDENCE IN THE BDG AND AS PROOF THAT BANGLADESH HAS A FUTURE ECONOMICALLY.

4. MOST CONTROVERSIAL ASPECT OF VISIT WAS ITS PORTENT FOR BDG'S FOREIGN POLICY. SUPPORTERS OF BDG'S NONALIGNED POLICY SAW VISIT AS IN PERFECT KEEPING WITH THAT POLICY, AS AN EFFORT AT GOOD RELATIONS WITH ALL THE POWERS AND AS IN NO WAY A LESSENING OF ITS TIES WITH THE SOVIET UNION OR ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH CHINA. MODERATE AND LEFTIST CRITCS OF MUJIB AN HIS INDIAN AND SOVIET TIES, HOWEVER, PERSIST IN INTERPRETING THE VISIT AS SIGNALING A SWING TO THE WEST. THE COINCIDENTAL FIRING OF TAJUDDIN AHMED A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL WAS TAKEN AS PROOF BY MANY IN BOTH THESE GROUPS THAT MUJIB IS ALTERING HIS POLICIES TO SUIT THE AMERICANS.

5. THE VISIT EVOKED FAR MORE INTEREST AND ANTICIPATION AMONG BENGALLEES THAN ANY OTHER SAVE THAT OF BHUTTO IN JUNE AND DREW IMPRESSIVELY LARGE, UNSOLICITED CROWDS ALONG THE ROUTE, AN INTEREST WHICH WAS ALSO REFLECTED IN THE PRESS COVERAGE AFTER THE EVENT. WE SENSE FROM WHAT EVIDENCE WE HAVE THAT SHEIKH MUJIB'S GENUINE PLEASURE WITH THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE TALKS-- ON HIS HOME TERRITORY WHERE HE IS ALWAYS AT HIS MOST CONFIDENT -- BUOYED HIS SPIRITS, WHICH HAVE BEEN DAMPENED CONSIDERABLE OF LATE BY THE SEEMINGLY INTRACTABLE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF HIS IMPOVERISHED NATION AND THE CONSEQUENT POLITICAL UNREST, BOTH WITHIN AND WITHOUT HIS OWN PARTY.

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BOSTER

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## Message Attributes

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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 09 NOV 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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